

Military and Veterans Affairs

General Overview

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, known as the State military establishment, constitutes the armed forces of the State. The armed forces of Michigan, and the Army and Air National Guard, serve under the orders of the Governor. As commander-in-chief, the Governor appoints an adjutant general to serve as commanding general of the Michigan National Guard and as Director of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. In turn, the Director appoints three deputy directors who serve as assistant adjutant generals of the Army, Air National Guard, and Veterans Affairs.

The Michigan Army and Air National Guard have a mission to both the Federal government and the State of Michigan.

The Federal and primary mission of the Department is to recruit, train, and maintain the Michigan Army and Air National Guard as reserve components of the United States Army and Air Force for Federal mobilization. Thousands Michigan Army and Air National Guard members were mobilized in support of Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm during 1990-91 and during the recent Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom military actions.

The State military mission of the Department is to train and maintain National Guard forces for the protection of life and property of Michigan citizens in natural disasters and the preservation of peace, order, and public safety.

The Veterans Affairs mission of the Department is to oversee State veterans services, including the operation of two veterans' homes, the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund, and State grants to veterans service organizations.

Major Divisions and Programs

National Guard. The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs provides services for approximately 15,000 military personnel allocated to the Michigan National Guard. Approximately 2,400 full-time employees (State and Federal) are assigned to various divisions, sections, and units located in Lansing; at 56 garrison training centers across the State; three air bases (Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Alpena Air National Guard Base, and Battle Creek Air National Guard Base); 32 maintenance shops; the 146,000-acre military reservation at Camp Grayling; and the 7,500-acre Fort Custer Training Center in Battle Creek. Camp Grayling is one of the largest military training sites east of the Mississippi. Approximately 40,000 troops train at Camp Grayling annually.

Veteran's Services. Since 1983, the Department has had the additional responsibility of administering grants and appropriations for veterans' service organizations and selected programs. Executive Reorganization Order No. 1991-7 directed the transfer of Michigan's two State supported veterans' facilities (homes) in Grand Rapids and Marquette from the Department of Public Health to the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, effective September 1, 1991, adding health care services to the Department's traditional State property and infrastructure management activities. Executive Order 1995-15 transferred the responsibility for the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund to the Department, which included administration of the Fund's Emergency Grant Program and Survivor Tuition Program.